

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A composition of matter comprising an isolated polypeptide shown in SEQ ID NO:1 or variants thereof.
2. The composition of claim 1, further comprising a carrier.
3. An article of manufacture comprising packaging material and, contained within the packaging material, a polypeptide shown in SEQ ID NO:1 or variants thereof.
4. The article of manufacture of claim 3 wherein the packaging material comprises a label that indicates that the polypeptide can be used for the identification of *Ehrlichia* infection in a mammal.
5. The article of manufacture of claim 4, wherein the identification of an *Ehrlichia* infection is done using a method of detecting presence of antibodies to *Ehrlichia* comprising:
 - (a) contacting a polypeptide shown in SEQ ID NO:1, or variants thereof, with a test sample suspected of comprising antibodies to *Ehrlichia*, under conditions that allow polypeptide/antibody complexes to form;
 - (b) detecting polypeptide/antibody complexes;wherein the detection of polypeptide/antibody complexes is an indication that an *Ehrlichia* infection is present.
6. The article of manufacture of claim 4, wherein the *Ehrlichia* infection is caused by *Ehrlichia canis* or *Ehrlichia chaffeensis*.